Government propose to observe the year 2006 as the 'Ex-Servicemen Year'.,

(b) if so, the high-lights of such observance; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) There is no such proposal under consideration at the moment.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Kaveri engine For LCA

2384. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is looking for a global technical partner to develop Kaveri engine for the Lighter Combat Aircraft;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government has spent Rs. 1300 crores on engine project;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the engine will be istalled on LCA only by 2012; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) had undertaken development of Kaveri engine to meet the propulsion needs of LCA project. During Aero India 2005 number of manufacturers displayed engine technology. In order to expedite the Kaveri engine development, DRDO has explored the possibility of partnership with other leading manufacturers. Expressions of Interest have been sought from all reputed military engine manufacturers to assess the level of interest in such a proposal.

(c) Gas Turbine Research Establishment, Bangalore a laboratory of DRDO has spent Rs. 1159 crore on Kaveri engine till June 2005.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. Kaveri engine has been planned to be integrated with LCA by March 2007.

Drugging and looting of army personnel

2385. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some well-organised gangs drug army personnel travelling on trains and buses and then disappear with their belongings and ID cards;

(b) if so, the number of such incidents reported in recent months;

(c) whether the stolen ID cards are likely to be misused by militants; and

(d) the measures taken by the army to check incidents of army personnel being drugged and robbed in trains and buses?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A total number of 13 cases of drugging of army personnel have been reported during April, 2005 to June, 2005.

(c) No such case has come to light, so far.

(d) Army personnel have been educated by various means to guard against being drugged and robbed, while travelling. Instructions have also been issued to carry out patrolling of Railway Stations/Bus Terminals in some cases.

Recruitment rallies in Karnataka

2386. SHRI K.B.KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of recruitment rallies held for recruitmentrs for subordinate posts in Indian Army in Karnataka ,for the past two years;

(b) how many candidates appeared for physical fitness and English language tests;

(c) what is the percentage of candidates who got through physical fitness tests but had not passed written test;